

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A process for preparing dinitrotoluene by nitration of toluene, which comprises providing a feedstock of nitrocresol-containing extracts obtained by removing nitrocresols from an alkaline wastewater of mononitrotoluene preparation, which comprises adding one or more acids to the alkaline wastewater of mononitrotoluene preparation to obtain a pH of at most 3 and treating the nitrocresols with an extractant then utilizing the extracted nitrocresols as a feed-stock in the preparation of dinitrotoluene.
2. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the one or more acids have a pK_a value of at most 2.
3. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the one or more acids are mineral acids.
4. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nitrocresols are extracted with toluene, o-, m-, p-nitrotoluene or mixtures thereof.
5. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the volume ratio of the wastewater to be extracted to the extractant is from 1:1 to 50:1.
6. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nitrocresol-containing extracts are added as a substream to the process stage of mononitration of toluene.
7. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the nitrocresol-containing extracts are added as a substream to the process stage of dinitration.

8. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the amount of nitroresols added by the addition of the extracts is between 0.01 and 1% by weight based on the amount of dinitrotoluene obtained.
9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the acids are mineral acids.
10. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 4, wherein the volume ratio of the wastewater to be extracted to the extractant is from 1:1 to 50:1.
11. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 11, wherein the nitroresol-containing extracts are added as a substream to the process stage of dinitration.
12. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2, wherein the acids are selected from nitric acid, sulfuric acid or a mixture thereof.
13. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein adding the one or more acids includes obtaining a pH of at most 2.
14. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 5, wherein the volume ratio is from 2:1 to 10:1.
15. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 6, wherein the extractant is toluene.
16. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 7, wherein the extractant is 0-, m-, p-nitrotoluene.

17. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing dinitrotoluene by nitration of toluene according to claim 1, comprising:

providing a feedstock of nitrocresol-containing extracts obtained from a wastewater stream of a mononitrotoluene process, wherein nitrotoluene is used as an extractant; and

adding the feedstock to the dinitrotoluene process such that the amount of nitrocresols added by the addition of the extracts is between 0.01 and 1% by weight based on the amount of dinitrotoluene obtained.

18. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 17, wherein the volume ratio of the wastewater to the dinitrotoluene extractant is from 2:1 to 10:1.